



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------

09/904,908	07/16/2001	Hiromichi Komori	XA-9517	3669
------------	------------	------------------	---------	------

181 7590 05/21/2004

MILES & STOCKBRIDGE PC
1751 PINNACLE DRIVE
SUITE 500
MCLEAN, VA 22102-3833

EXAMINER

DUNWOODY, AARON M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3679

DATE MAILED: 05/21/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No. 09/904,908	Applicant(s) KOMORI ET AL
Examiner Aaron M Dunwoody	Art Unit 3679

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply.

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02 April 2004.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 2, 6, 8, 12, 14, 18, 20 and 21 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) 2, 6, 8, 12 and 18 is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 14, 20 and 21 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
- 1) Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - 2) Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - 3) Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

Applicant's request for reconsideration of the finality of the rejection of the last Office action is persuasive and, therefore, the finality of that action is withdrawn.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 14, 20 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US patent 5916026, Sadakata.

In regards to claims 14 and 20, Sadakata discloses an elastic shaft coupling (101a) comprising a joint member (104) formed with a hole; a hollow shaft member (102a) received in the joint member; an elastic member (111) interposed radially between the joint member and the hollow shaft member to flex and deform upon relative rotation between the joint member and the hollow shaft member; stopper portions provided, respectively, on the joint member and the hollow shaft member to restrict the relative rotation therebetween within a predetermined amount; and the stopper portions provided on the joint member each including a pair of stopper faces spaced from each other in a peripheral direction to form a gap therebetween, the stopper portions provided on the hollow shaft member each being radially outwardly projected into the gap formed between the stopper faces of the corresponding stopper portion provided on the joint

Art Unit: 3679

member, the stopper portions on the hollow shaft member being formed by flaring an end of the hollow shaft member to be projected radially outwardly. Sadakata does not disclose the radially outermost points of contact of each stopper portion being disposed inwardly from respective centers of the stopper faces along a radial direction. US patent 5672111, Schremmer et al., or US patent 6283867, Aota et al. teach a radially outermost points of contact of each stopper portion being disposed inwardly from respective centers of the stopper faces along a radial direction. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to fabricate the radially outermost points of contact of each stopper portion disposed inwardly from respective centers of the stopper faces along a radial direction, since a change in the size of a prior art device is a design consideration within the skill of the art. In re Rose, 220 F.2d 459, 105 USPQ 237 (CCPA 1955).

Further, the method of forming, in particular, the stopper portions on the hollow shaft member being formed by flaring an end of the hollow shaft member to be projected radially outwardly, the device is not germane to the issue of patentability of the device itself. Therefore, this limitation has not been given patentable weight.

In regards to claim 21, Sadakata discloses the claimed invention except for the hollow shaft member being a steel pipe of a low carbon steel. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to fabricate the hollow shaft member from a steel pipe of a low carbon steel, since it has been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material

on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice.

In re Leshin, 125 USPQ 416.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 2, 6, 8, 12 and 18 are allowed.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 14, 20 and 21 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

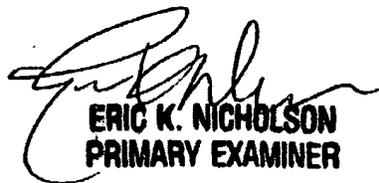
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Aaron M Dunwoody whose telephone number is (703) 306-3436. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday between 7:30 am to 4:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lynne H Browne can be reached on (703) 308-1159. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Art Unit: 3679

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

.amd *am*


ERIC K. NICHOLSON
PRIMARY EXAMINER